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Canada

CANADA'S NEW GOVERNMENT FUNDS SCHOOL EXPANSION PROJECTS IN ALBERTA

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Calgary, Alberta (April 5 2007) – The Honourable Jim Prentice, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, today announced that the federal government would fund three school expansion and construction projects in Alberta, totalling $25.2 million over three years. This is part of the federal government's national announcement of more than $50 million for school infrastructure projects across the country.

"Canada's New Government is committed to improving on-reserve student retention and graduation rates. Establishing facilities that meet existing educational requirements is the first step towards this goal," said Minister Prentice. "These projects will ensure these young people have a place to learn that is both healthy and safe, and measures up to standards in other parts of the country."

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada will invest in the following projects:

Sunchild School: INAC will contribute $10,756,380 over three years towards the expansion of the current kindergarten to grade 12 school at Sunchild First Nation. The First Nation will contribute a further $1,088,200 to this project.

Sunchild First Nation, located northwest of Rocky Mountain House, has an on-reserve population of approximately 680 residents.

Big Horn Ta Otha School: INAC will contribute $12,001,280 over three years to the Stoney Tribe towards the construction of a new school to replace the existing collection of classroom portables that does not meet the needs or program requirements of both the on and off-reserve students that attend the school.

Stoney Tribe, located west of Calgary, has an on-reserve population of approximately 4,000 residents. It is comprised of three First Nations: Bearspaw First Nation, Chiniki First Nation and Wesley First Nation.

Morley School: INAC will contribute $2,481,340 over three years towards the construction of a new gymnasium at Stoney Tribe's Morley elementary school. Currently, students and teachers travel to a different facility to meet physical education requirements, posing a health and safety risk that is heightened during the winter months.

Construction on these projects is slated to start in the Spring 2007.

"Canada's new government will continue to take the necessary steps towards improving outcomes in First Nations education. These investments will make a measurable difference in the quality of education for these students, and will help to ensure they reach their full academic potential," said Minister Prentice.

Canada's New Government continues to make investments for education facilities across Canada to support projects such as construction, renovation, repair, and design and planning projects,

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including operation and maintenance, to improve learning environments.

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